Dear Affiliate Members,

The year 2021 has started with a very important meeting for the Organization: the 113th UNTWO Executive Council, which was held on 18-19 January 2021 in Madrid (Spain). I would like to share my satisfaction for the great visibility of the activities of the Affiliate Members in this relevant event.

The Affiliate Members and the Board of Affiliate Members had an excellent representation through the Communication of the Board, Ms Ana Larrañaga, who presented the main activities carried out by the affiliates since the previous Executive Council, held in September 2020. Among them were the celebration, under excellent conditions in a very difficult context, of our 42nd Plenary Session, and the preparation of our Programme of Work 2021, with excellent proposals from the Affiliate Members in support of the Organization’s priorities. Another important initiative, which was highlighted, was the initiation of the process of the Reform of the Legal Framework for Affiliate Membership, and the creation of a Working Group to achieve this important mandate.

During 2021, the implementation of the Legal Reform will be of high priority for the Affiliate Members Department, and for the UNWTO. This much-needed reform will result in a more modern and efficient functioning of the AM network, and, consequently, in an improved partnership between the Organization and the private sector. Therefore, the contributions of the Affiliate Members in this matter are vital. Hence, the Chair of the Board, with the support of my Department, will organize a series of consultations throughout the year aimed at gathering your very valuable input.

As the new year starts, it is time to work on the activities and plans taking place in 2021, which I am sure we will successfully implement. I want to emphasize that the Affiliate Members currently have a well-deserved opportunity to actively participate in all UNWTO priority initiatives to restart tourism, such as the development of an International Code for the Protection of Tourists.

The participation of the Affiliate Members in the above-mentioned projects, and other key initiatives, will be permanently sustained by a very broad and in-depth consultation with the members of the Board and the entire membership.

We will keep you duly updated on these and other activities taking place this year. I strongly encourage you to actively use the AMConnected platform, and other communication channels, where you will find all information published in due time.

As always, I am at your disposal and look forward to hearing any comment you may have.

Yours sincerely, Ion Vilcu
A WISH FOR 2021

“In 2021 I wish for the whole world that the vaccine reaches everyone and that we refer to the COVID-19 in the past-tense, concentrating our energy on work and travel. I wish that we will definitely recover the social and economic activity with the premise of health, security, confidence and progress.”

Ana Larrañaga. Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members
FITUR (Spain)

“In 2021, I wish that the United States rejoin the United Nations World Tourism Organization. And I call for Affiliate Members to join George Washington University by actively encouraging the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries or leading tourism organizations to join UNWTO as active Member States or Affiliate Members. Globally, such actions should catalase unprecedented levels of international cooperation through “Build Back Better” tourism recovery strategies.”

Donald Hawkins. First Vice-Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members. George Washington University (USA)

“In 2021 I wish that we will all learn from 2020 and the COVID-19 in preparing for a more regenerative and resilient tourism ecosystem and combat other threats such as future pandemics and climate change. I wish that the travel and tourism industry can come together in collaborating and leveraging local, regional, and global collaboration initiatives to build a more inclusive tourism sustainable industry for future generations. Organizations such as the UNWTO and its Affiliate Members program are critical catalysts to achieve this goal.”

Jens Traenhart. Second Vice-Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members. Chameleon Strategies (Thailand)
Aldo Elías, president of the Argentine Chamber of Tourism (CAT), shares with us how Argentina is supporting tourism recovery in a region where the COVID-19 crisis affecting the tourism industry is compounded by the economic crisis and the loss of international air connections.

What actions is CAT currently taking to drive the tourism sector forward amidst the COVID-19 pandemic?

CAT has played a very active role since the beginning of the pandemic. We have worked together with the public sector, the National Ministry of Tourism and Sports, in order to achieve positive measures for the sector. At the beginning of the pandemic, we held a meeting with the President of Argentina, Alberto Fernández; we also worked together with Congress Representatives and Senators who passed the Law for the Support and Productive Reactivation of National Tourism, which helped to get through such a difficult situation. Additionally, we played an essential role in the development of sanitary protocols, together with the National Ministry of Tourism and Sports and the validation of the National Ministry of Health, in order to advance in the reopening of tourism based on the implementation of maximum health and safety protocols. Likewise, we worked on the implementation of the Safe Travels seal by WTTC along with INPROTUR (National Institute for Tourism Promotion) with the purpose of rebuilding trust with travelers, and validated the health and safety measures with the highest international standards. We also organized training sessions and courses, such as the Ampliar Destinos (Broadening Destinations) cycle, aimed at touristic operators and providers.

“CAT is working on the reactivation, training, strengthening the commercialization chain and international promotion.”

President of CAT, Aldo Elías
CAT has bet on promoting “Accessible Tourism”, with the creation of the library of Accessible Tourism. Can you explain it briefly and how will it help tourism be more competitive?

The inclusion and the accessibility played a leading role in the Accessible Tourism Committee of CAT. In this Committee, we lead actions to promote accessible tourism, organize awareness cycles and implement a virtual library where you can find all existing legal material in our country. This will enable us to be aware of the different rules and provisions in Argentina. Thus, we will be able to promote better experiences and optimize competitiveness.

In 2021, What is your prediction for the tourism sector in Argentina? Which strategies and products will Argentina use to continue being a dynamic tourism destination?

Before reaching zero level, tourism in Argentina was growing in a sustained manner. We had reached the fourth place as a currency generator sector for the country, generating 5,400 million dollars in exports as far as international tourism is concerned. Additionally, domestic tourism had also consolidated with high levels of movement during high season as well as in long weekends.

For 2021, we anticipate that the reactivation will be slow and that there will be a drop in consumption. The impact of COVID-19 in the economy has been very strong. We estimate 20% of touristic structure – hotels, agencies, transport – in Argentina will not reopen after the crisis. In this context, we are working on the reactivation, on training, on strengthening the commercialization chain and international promotion. As for the opportunities, we can anticipate a future strong demand for nature tourism, with which Argentina and its wonderful proposal will have a privileged place as an international touristic destination.

Finally, tell us how you value your strategic cooperation with the UNWTO last year, and a wish for 2021!

The leadership role of the UNWTO has been critical in such a difficult context in 2020. From CAT, we share the willingness to work together, in alliance with the public and the private sector, in order to move forward. We hope that this year we will be able to reactivate tourism and revert the deepest crisis in history for this business sector. It is our most difficult challenge, but we are convinced that we will achieve it. In 2021, we must return to the path of growth and development of more inclusive and sustainable tourism for everyone’s benefit.
UNWTO HIGHLIGHTS

UNWTO Executive Council meets for 113th Session on 18-19 January 2021

The 113th session of the UNWTO Executive Council (UNWTOEC) was held as a hybrid event in Madrid, Spain, and virtually, on 18-19 January 2021. Representatives of the 35 Council members were provided with updates on the implementation of the UNWTO Programme of Work for 2021. The meeting also explored current tourism trends, including the impact of the ongoing pandemic on the sector. Find all the information here.

Meeting of the 8th Global Tourism Crisis Committee: next steps

During the 113th session of the UNWTOEC, the meeting of the 8th Global Tourism Crisis Committee was held on 18 January 2021 to advance solid plans to restart tourism. The meeting focused on the integration of vaccines into a harmonized approach to safe travel and launching a coordinated effort to boost confidence in the sector. Members highlighted the importance of stepping up coordination, and of vaccination certificates to ensure the implementation of common, harmonized digital related travel principles, protocols and documents. Read the recommendations and next steps here.

Zurab Pololikashvili, re-elected Secretary General for the term 2022-2025

The UNWTOEC meeting also included the election for the position of UNWTO Secretary-General for the term 2022-2025. As a result, Members nominated incumbent Pololikashvili to continue leading the Organization for four more years. Read more here.
The 113th session of the Executive Council, held on 18-19 January 2021, provided an excellent opportunity to increase the visibility of the activities of the Affiliate Members and their important contribution to the work of the Organization before tourism leaders worldwide and high representatives of international organizations, the civil society and the private sector.

The Report of the Secretary General highlighted some main activities of the Affiliate Membership since the previous meeting of the Executive Council, held in September 2020. Also, the Communication of the Chair of the Executive Council, Chile, stressed how the work of all the Affiliate Members "has been instrumental in setting out a roadmap for the process of building a new way of practicing tourism in the world".

Communication of the Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members

The Board of Affiliate Members and the Affiliate Members had an important representation through the Communication of the chair of the Board, Ms. Ana Larrañaga.

Ms. Ana Larrañaga presented the main activities carried out by the affiliates since the previous Executive Council. Among them were the success of the 42nd Affiliate Members Plenary Session; the definition of the Programme of Work for 2021; the implementation of a much-needed Reform of the Legal Framework for Affiliate Membership along with the creation of a Working Group; and the increased involvement of the Affiliate Members in important UNWTO projects, such as the development of an International Code for the Protection of Tourists.

Welcoming seven new entities to our Membership!

The UNWTOEC approved seven new candidates for Affiliate Membership. The new members represent a rich variety of profiles including universities, air travel, destination management organizations (DMOs), and technology and innovation consultancies. We wish them a very fruitful collaboration as part of our AM network! They are:

1. Allianz Partners España (Spain)
2. Conseil des Grands Crus Classés en 1855 (France)
3. Gulf Air (Kingdom of Bahrain)
4. Nova School of Business and Economics (Portugal)
5. Osaka Seikei University (Japan)
6. Patronato Provincial de Córdoba (Spain)
7. Tourism Data Driven Solutions (Spain)
THE ELECTIONS OF THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS WILL START IN OCTOBER 2021

The Affiliate Members Department is carrying out an important Reform of the Legal Framework for the Affiliate Membership, which will be finalized and approved in October 2021. This reform process includes an improvement that affects the functioning of the Board of Affiliate Members: the extension of its mandate from two to four years.

Consequently, it has been decided to postpone the next elections of the new Board Members to October 2021, once the new legal framework has been approved. As a consequence, the mandate of the current Board of Affiliate Members is extended until December 31, 2021.

With this reform, the new Board of Affiliate Members will begin its mandate in January 2022, coinciding with that of the UNWTO Secretary General, and for the same period 2022-2025.

NEW CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS FOR AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee for the Review of Applications for Affiliate Membership met virtually on 14 January 2021. During the meeting, the Members decided by consensus to elect Côte d’Ivoire as the Chair of the Committee, and the Islamic Republic of Iran as the Vice-Chair.

We would like to send our warmest congratulations to Côte d’Ivoire and the Islamic Republic of Iran for their appointments and thank them for their interest and support to the Affiliate Membership!
The Members of the Working Group for the Legal Reform met for the second time to be briefed about the scope of the reform and, more specifically, about the structure of the first draft text that will be provided to them by the Secretariat.

During this second meeting, held virtually on 14 January 2021, the Director of the Affiliate Members Department, Mr Ion Vilcu, presented an inventory of the articles and provisions of the current legal framework that will have to be updated and/or modified, pointing out at the main problems that will need to be solved in the new draft.

Also, Spain was elected to hold the presidency of the Working Group. To facilitate the task of the Working Group, as a starting point, the Secretariat will provide them with a first updated draft text before 15 February 2021. The WG will meet for the third time on 25 February 2021.

Email: am.reform@unwto.org

The 5 W’s of the Reform of the Legal Framework for the Affiliate Membership

WHAT:

The 112 Executive Council -at the proposal of the UNWTO Secretary General- established the mandate to Reform the Legal Framework of the Affiliate Membership. Achieving this mandate is a high priority for the Organization in the area of Affiliate Members in 2021.

WHY:

The current legal basis is outdated. It does not define properly important procedures related to the admission of new members or the functions, prerogatives and modus operandi of the governance bodies. It also lacks a regulation for the creation of a proper Committee of Affiliate Members.

WHO:

Working Group:

A Working Group for the Reform of the Affiliate Membership Legal Framework has been created with the mandate to elaborate the new updated legal framework. The WG is composed of 14 Member States and the Chair of the Board of the Affiliate Members, Ms Ana Larrañaga, as the representative of the Affiliate Members.

Affiliate Members

All Affiliate Members are requested to participate in the Reform by providing their very necessary input. For this, a series of consultations and Board Meetings will be organized by the Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members, Ms Ana Larrañaga, throughout 2021. The input gathered at these meetings will be incorporated into the work of the WG.

WHEN:

The WG will work on the new legal text through throughout 2021. The Secretariat has proposed a calendar with a series of meetings and a roadmap. The next meeting of the WG will take place in February.

The Affiliate Members will work on the new legal text through a series of consultations and Board Meetings in 2021. The Chair of the Board, Ms Ana Larrañaga, will organize them with the support of the AMD. These meetings will take place before the meetings of the WG. This way, the input of the Affiliate Members will be gathered beforehand and incorporated into the meetings of the WG.

WHERE:

The 24th UNWTO General Assembly in Morocco in autumn 2021 will be the venue to approve the resulting new legal framework.
Damiano Zamana, Operations Director at the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM), talks about the importance of Motorcycle Tourism and how it can help recover the sector, and shares FIM’s vision of an International Motorcycle Summit in 2021.

In your opinion, why is Moto Tourism so important and how can it help recover tourism?

I recognize that tourism in motorcycle represents a niche sector into the total turnover of the tourism industry. However recent research shows that, for example in Italy, motorcycle tourism has a value of 2 billion Euros per year, it estimates a potential market of 11 million of motorcycle tourists in Europe. Another research pointed out that around 16% of motorcycle owners use the motorcycle for long holidays and around 75% use motorcycle for leisure activities. To have an idea of the potentiality of motorcycle tourism we shall refer to the number of registered motorcycles, which reports a worldwide number of 1.37 billion with the highest presence in Asia and Latin America. It is worth to note that motorcycle tourism allows to benefit from the territory all year round not being linked with the seasonality, furthermore it generates revenues all along the travel and not only on destinations; revenues that benefits several commercial sectors and, often, small and medium businesses.

How can this area be best fostered? What is needed?

Motorcycle tourists need to have access to offers coming from the territory where resources, opportunities and services are rationalized. At the same time, tourism, hospitality and culture operators shall, through synergies, provide integrated offers that valorise the quality of contents, safety for tourists and the fruition of sites of naturalistic, historical and architectural interest. Enhancing differentiation of offers has positive returns in the increase of the length of stay.

“Motorcycle tourism allows to benefit from the territory all year round and generate revenues all along the travel”

Damiano Zamana
We need to develop a motorcycle tourism culture that makes participants appreciate the naturalistic, cultural and gastronomic aspects of the sites visited, raising awareness on respect for the environment. Finally, we have to be able to shift the motorcycle tourists’ paradigm from touristic gatherings to individual tourism of discovery, thus minimizing overcrowded concentrations favouring less known destinations.

Let’s talk about the International Moto Tourism Summit. Could you briefly explain the idea, vision and objectives? What is FIM’s role?

The idea is to give hope to motorcycle tourists after the “annus horribilis” caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking into account the information provided from health authorities we would like to organize, through one of our affiliates, a safe touring event asking to participants to ride across Europe and Asia while benefitting from the richness of the visited countries along the journey. Meeting all together at a rendezvous point where they will be offered with a travelling experience touching different cities and villages with a variety of sceneries, providing them with high standard of accommodation and services and giving a deep insight into the local culture, traditions and history. In this case the FIM will support the organiser and invite all motorcyclists from its 113 affiliate members’ countries to actively participate in the success of this proposal.

Lastly, can you give us a tentative date and place for the Summit?

I have to be cautious in providing this answer because, as at today, COVID “rules”. But we are confident to be able to provide this opportunity to all motorcycle tourists from the 20th to the 24th of September 2021 in the beautiful resort town of Kusadasi, on Turkey’s Aegean cost.
Urban Leisure Promotes Residents’ Life Quality in the Yangtze River Delta

The research team led by Professor Lou Jiajun from the Shanghai Institute of Tourism (SIT) has released the 2020 Yangtze River Delta Urban Leisure Index Report. The report covers 31 indicators from five aspects: economic and industrial development, leisure service and reception, leisure life and consumption, leisure space and environment, transportation facilities and scale. It measures and analyzes 41 prefecture-level cities in the Yangtze River Delta, including the city of Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui Provinces.

With COVID-19 anti-epidemic normalization, the research team concludes that: 1) residents pay more attention to happiness, sense of gain and security nowadays, which facilitate the balance and adequacy of urban leisure infrastructures and services; 2) the residents’ leisure consumption potential in culture, tourism and sports, etc. will be further released; 3) the Yangtze River Delta is accelerating from “all-region tourism” to “all-region leisure”.

Eco-movement SANSARA at the Center for Sustainable Development of NOSU University has become a regional representative of “Delai!”

“Delai!” (translated into English as “Do it!”) is an All-Russian public organization for the development of volunteering in environmental protection, which unites volunteers across the country, with particular focus on ecotourism and specially protected natural areas. The organization provides informational and organizational support with the purpose to promote responsible attitude towards nature. The organization was created in September 2020 and already unites 46 Russian regions.

“Eco-movement SANSARA” at the Centre for Sustainable Development of NOSU University became a regional representative of “Delai!” in September 2020, and already organized two regional events.

In collaboration with the regional Ministry of Ecology, SANSARA organized “Save the Forest” event – All-Russian project aimed at reforestation of suburban areas. The planting took place during 10 days, with more than 100,000 trees planted by activists, regional authorities and public organizations.

SANSARA also organized a strategic session “Future of environmental volunteering in Russia”, which united eight regional public and state organizations, including representatives of the specially protected natural area “National Park Alania” and State Natural Reserve, in order to determine the scale of current activities in environmental volunteering and draw up a general plan of common measures to improve environmental situation in the region.
Application of Neuroscience Technology in Hospitality and Tourism Research Discussed at SHTM

Recent developments in neuroscience are gradually revealing the secrets of human brain and empowering researchers to uncover the underlying mechanisms behind human behaviour. The marriage between neuroscience and hospitality and tourism is believed to offer an alternative means to understand tourists' behaviour.

The Hospitality and Tourism Research Centre (HTRC) of the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University hosted a workshop entitled “Application of Neuroscience Approach in Hospitality and Tourism Research”. Led by Dr Mimi Li, SHTM Associate Professor, together with her research assistant Mr Guyang Lin, the workshop shared basic technologies in neuroscience and discussed the prospects for their application in hospitality and tourism research. The SHTM looks forward to a deeper and broader interdisciplinary collaboration to innovate a brand-new vision.

Experts debate the impact of global health on tourism at the CETT Observatory

The CETT-UB held a new edition of the CETT Observatory. The Observatory brought together experts in health and tourism to discuss the impact of global health on tourism and the challenges it represents for urban destinations.

The unification of health protocols and the need for travelers to have up-to-date information on the sanitary situation of their chosen destinations are fundamental elements in giving confidence to tourists. Experts also pointed out that the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism sector is crucial, but the coordination between both government and health administrations is fundamental for its recovery.

Research in the fields of health and tourism will be fundamental to make decisions. In this line, in the framework of the Observatory, Dr. Oriol Anguera-Torrell, director of the CETT-UB Research Group in Tourism Accommodation and Restoration, has presented an index that measures the effect of the pandemic on urban tourism and its evolution month by month. CETT, with its commitment to generate debate and reflection in its areas of expertise, has set up a space for discussion with the Observatory, where the world of academia meets professionals from different fields to share their experiences on current issues that concern the sector.
Master’s Degree in Tourism Companies and Destinations with a specialization in Innovation and Tourism Intelligence

Nebrija University offers a new Master’s degree with an innovative and interdisciplinary specialization in the field of tourism intelligence. The programme revolves around: innovation, digital transformation, and tourism intelligence. An Advisory Council, comprised of relevant institutions and organizations from the Spanish tourism industry, provides guidance and direction on the appropriate curricula. Furthermore, the collaboration of the Advisory Council in research projects and in specific academic programs, among others, creates synergies between enterprises, institutions and universities that provide value to the Master’s participants.

The teaching staff include PhD professors who are experts in innovation and tourism intelligence, and practitioners who hold senior management positions in areas such as marketing, business development, destination management, and technology, or are tourism entrepreneurs. Additionally, the most influential leaders in the tourism sector are involved in master classes, conferences, workshops, and other complementary learning activities. For participants, this means specialized training that allows them to acquire the competences and skills needed to adapt to the tourism dynamic environment and to successfully face the structural changes that will arise from this crisis More here.

CNC’s Tourism and Hospitality assists the sector during the pandemic

The Tourism and Hospitality Business Council of the National Confederation of Commerce, Services and Tourism (Cetur/CNC) presented to the state federations chambers and councils of the sector the actions that took place during the pandemic. These included: several negotiations with government agencies to avoid a total collapse of the tourism industry with most provisional measures converted into laws; a series of on-line interviews and meetings to guide businessmen about actions and protocols to minimize the spread of covid-19; and daily publications in social media with content about the hygiene and security measures seeking to help hospitality’s entrepreneurs adapt to the current situation.

Aiming a full recover in 2021, the Council has launched a campaign named “Moving Tourism” in partnership with CNC’s Communication Management. The main goal of the campaign is to promote domestic tourism and encourage discussions and actions to boost the resumption of regional tourism.
Organizer: ITB Berlin Now
Website

March: Seminar on Sustainable Tourism in World Heritage Cities
Organizer: Ciudades Patrimonio de la Humanidad
Website

Organizer: World Leisure Organization.
Website

May 2021: International Conference on Tourism and the Audio-visual Industry Platino Awards Gala
Organizer: UNWTO, EGEDA, the Tourism Promotion Council of Quintana Roo, Xcaret Group.
Website: TBC

May 2021, 19-23: FITUR, the International Tourism Fair in Madrid (Spain)
Special edition dedicated to the recovery of tourism.
Organizer: IFEMA-FITUR.
Website

June 2021, 3-5: 1st International Conference on Astrotourism in Évora (Portugal)
Organizer: Starlight Foundation and Dark Sky Associação.
Website: TBC

June 2021, 12: UN Global Compact (UNGC) Leaders Summit 2021
Organizers: UN Global Compact
Website

Organizer: FIM
Website: TBC

5th Wine Tourism Conference in Alentejo (Portugal)
TBC

September, 27: World Tourism Day

October 2021, 28-29: World Sports Tourism Congress in Lloret de Mar, Catalonia (Spain)
Organizers: UNWTO and Agencia Catalana de Turismo
Website

October 2021: 24th UNWTO General Assembly and 43rd UNWTO Affiliate Members Plenary Session in Marrakech (Morocco)
Organizer: UNWTO
Website: TBC
The UNWTO Affiliate Members Department is responsible for the management of the partnership between UNWTO and the private sector.

Contact us at: am@unwto.org